

Sovereign But Submitted — Delivery Transcript

****Matthew 8:23-27 (CSB) · Wes Terry · Sunday, August 30, 2026 · *What Man Is This?*****

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We're in a series right now in the Gospel of Matthew. We're, as a church, trying to answer the question of who is Jesus? What man is this? It's a question that people are starting to ask again, because of a renewed interest for whatever reason in God and Christianity in particular — just a real growth among young men in particular trying to explore Christianity and figure out what it's about. And so we're answering that question.

And one of the things that people often use as an argument against Christianity is what's called the problem of pain and suffering. That's sometimes phrased the problem of evil. It's very common for atheist, agnostic type people to say, "If God is so great and so strong and so mighty, then why is there so much suffering in the world? Why is there so much pain?"

And maybe some of you have even asked that question — and not even at a philosophical level, but in your own life. "Lord, why? Why is this happening to me?" Staring up at the ceiling at 2:00 in the morning questioning in your heart, "God, do you see this? Do you care? Is this what you wanted? Am I doing something wrong? Is this punishment?"

All of us have had moments like that, and so you've felt at a very personal level the problem of pain and suffering. And the thing is, I know atheists will use this as an argument against Christianity, but the problem of pain and suffering is a problem we all face — not just Christian people. It's a problem for Muslim people. It's a problem for atheistic people. It's a problem for Buddhist people. It's a problem for every single person. And the passage that we're looking at today, I think, gives us an answer.

What's interesting to me is that there are great Christian philosophers much smarter than me who have done really good work on the intellectual solution to this problem. There is a philosophical answer to the problem of evil that has largely gone unanswered or unrefuted, and so it gives a lot of Christians confidence that one of our great thinkers like Alvin Plantinga has kind of solved this internal contradiction that people say is inherent within Christianity.

But I've found as a pastor that people are not really comforted by the intellectual answer to the problem of evil. When they're hurting, they're not saying, "Give me the philosophical answer to the problem of evil." They're saying, "How do I keep my faith? How do I endure? How do I survive this? Because my suffering isn't theoretical, it isn't academic. It's a lived experience, and I need to know — does God see it? Does God care? And how do I keep my faith?" So that I am not crushed by the weight of this difficulty and pain.

And what I'm so thankful about the Scripture is it doesn't ignore the problem. Sometimes you can feel like you're not allowed to ask that question in church, that churches can sometimes dodge this issue. But it's a lived reality that we all face. We can't dodge it. We've got to address it. And Jesus addresses it, and Matthew addresses it in our passage today.

The way that he addresses it may feel on the surface counterintuitive, because what Matthew is going to do is present to us two big key truths that look contradictory — on the surface may seem like they don't belong together — but it is actually those two truths, when held in tension, that give you the resources necessary to get through suffering.

And they're in a way already built up as we've been working through Matthew chapter 8 and examining the context. We've seen that Matthew's goal in writing this gospel is to prove to his readers, who are Jewish, that Jesus is the Messiah. He's been doing it from chapter 1. For those of you who don't know, the Messiah was a promised deliverer in the Old Testament who was going to liberate God's people from their sin and their bondage to Rome and oppressors and stuff like that. And so a lot of people claimed to be the Messiah, a lot of people were not, a lot of people had failed projects. But Matthew says Jesus is different.

And he gives evidences and support for why Jesus was different — one of them being his incredible teaching and his miracles. And so we've looked at his teaching in Matthew 5 to 7, and we've been looking at his miracles over the last couple of weeks.

And when Jesus comes down the mountain having taught the Sermon on the Mount, he comes down the same way that he went up: surrounded by lots of people. He was surrounded by lots of people because of not just what he said — he spoke with authority unlike other religious leaders — but it was also what he did. How he could heal someone with a touch. How he could say the word and a

Roman centurion's servant would be healed without Jesus even seeing him. Jesus obviously demonstrated authority over sickness and disease and evil and things like that. So much so, if you doubted it, Matthew reminds us that there was one night in Capernaum when Jesus healed literally every sick person. Every sick person in Capernaum was healed over the entire evening. And it says right after that that Jesus was surrounded by great crowds.

And so as these great crowds are surrounding Jesus, Jesus gives a test to determine who's really with him — and Jesus would often do this — and this establishes our first key truth. The first key truth is that **in the face of suffering, Jesus is sovereign**. The crowds are there because they believe this truth. They have seen it with their eyes. Jesus has power. He has power over disease. He has power over sickness. If he can fix that, he can fix me.

What Jesus goes on to say to those who would come to him is: if you really want the full package, you're going to have to choose to follow. And he talks to two people who have two different faith conditions, basically saying, "Jesus, I'll follow you, but I got this thing right here." And what Jesus responds with in both cases is, "I am unwilling to be second. I will not abide divided loyalties for those who follow, because I am sovereign. I'm a king. You've got to have no conditions. Those who follow me give their ultimate allegiance."

But it's the thing that Jesus says in answering it that way that gives you the second key truth, which is about suffering — and specifically about the suffering of Jesus. Jesus says to the scribe, "I've got no place to lay my head." He doesn't even say "I," he says "the Son of Man," which again was a messianic title about royalty and sovereignty. Jesus says, "I'm the Son of Man," Daniel 7 talked about. "I'm the royal king who's basically going to establish the Kingdom of God." But to the scribe who would say, "I'll follow you," Jesus says the words, "Even the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

So in the face of our suffering and sin and disease, Jesus is sovereign. But there's another truth, and that truth is that **in the face of the Father's will, Jesus is submitted** — and as a result of that, he suffers. Jesus suffers. Ultimately, he suffers and even dies because of his submission to the Father's will. And as we face our suffering, Matthew wants us to see that when you hold those truths in tension, then you can survive the storm.

The reason I think that's the subtext for our passage today is because of the way that Matthew tells the story and how he frames it around those two truths. Jesus was submitted to the will of his heavenly Father. That's the very reason why he goes to the other side. He tells the people, "Go to the other side of the lake," because on the other side of the lake was this demon-possessed man, were these Gentiles in the Decapolis who were ceremonially unclean to Jewish people. But Jesus was on a mission to seek and save the lost, and it was in his submission to the Father's will that the Father brought him right into a storm.

And that's the context, that's the setup for how Matthew tells the story. So let's read starting in Matthew 8, verse — let's actually start in verse 18, so that you can see how Matthew is framing all of this as one unit, because he's the only one that does this. Luke and Mark do not. Certainly John doesn't. Matthew's very unique.

"So when Jesus saw a large crowd around him, he gave the order to go to the other side of the sea. A scribe approached him and said, 'Teacher, I'll follow you wherever you go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have dens, birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.' 'Lord,' another of his disciples said, 'first let me go and bury my father.' But Jesus told him, 'Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.' And then as he got into the boat, his disciples followed him." — Matthew 8:18-23 CSB

Now, before we keep reading, I just want you to see. It opens with Jesus giving the order. It closes with the order being obeyed. In between both of those is a faith condition from two people. In both cases, Jesus says, "No way. Those who follow me give their ultimate allegiance" — because Jesus is sovereign. He's the king.

But then notice what happens. As they get into the boat, "Suddenly, a violent storm arose on the sea so that the boat was being swamped by the waves, but Jesus, he kept on sleeping. So the disciples came and woke him up saying, 'Lord, save us. We're going to die.' And he said to them, 'Why are you afraid, you of little faith?' Then he got up and he rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. And the men were amazed and asked, 'What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey him.'"

Now, I again find it very fascinating how Matthew tells the story and how it's so much different than Mark and Luke — to the point that Matthew not only arranges it differently, he puts it more thematic than he does chronological. If you read Luke, that's the chronological order. Matthew sandwiches it here to make a thematic point about the authority of Jesus, but also about our suffering.

Matthew also uses different vocabulary words to describe the nature of the storm, to describe the impact on the boat, to describe the order in which Jesus addresses the disciples and stills the storm. All of that is different for a particular purpose, because Matthew wants us to understand the relationship between discipleship and suffering. Because sometimes it is actually in choosing to follow Jesus that you will be brought into the thing that shakes your life.

You can follow Jesus and have your life get shaken. Sometimes it's because you follow Jesus that the shaking actually happens.

Now, in saying that, I'm not saying that God caused this storm or God sent the storm or anything like that. But it is a universal truth that we're going to see from here on out. You can follow Jesus and have your life get shaken.

Now, even the word "shaken" — I know you think, "Why are you saying shaken? It's a storm." I agree, but Matthew uses a different word. When Luke and Mark tell this story, they use the word that's translated "windstorm," which is what you would imagine — a windstorm, a hurricane, and all that that entails. Matthew uses the Greek word *seismos*, which is where in the English you can hear the word "seismograph."

What do you use a seismograph for? A seismograph is a way to measure and chart the force of an energy wave. So if there's a disturbance in the world — say there's some big crash, or let's say the earth shakes, which is often how this word is translated. The earth begins to shake, and what happens? You have an energy force that's kind of unleashed from that point of disturbance, and it will travel. That's where a seismic wave comes from. There's some kind of disturbance in the ocean, and so boom, the power of that wave is a result of that thing.

That's the word that Matthew uses to describe this suffering. Their lives are being shaken. And what I think he means for us to envision is there are these men in the boat, and the nature of the waves, the nature of the wind was causing the boat to go like this, and they were literally being tossed back and forth like little rag dolls. And that's exactly how suffering feels for many people.

It's like I can't catch a break. When it rains, it pours. I'm sure you've said that before. It's just one thing after the next, after the next, after the next.

And it's one thing if that happens in your life because you're paying the stupid tax, as Dave Ramsey likes to say. You know, when you are living foolishly, reality can kick back, and sometimes you suffer because of your own dumb choices. That you can kind of stomach. I get it, Lord.

But it's when you're being obedient to the Lord, and you're doing what he says, and you're living according to wisdom, and you tried to foresee all the potentials, and you were properly prepared, and you crossed your T's and dotted your I's, and you did everything right — and then still your life gets shaken. Those are the moments that Matthew wants us to think about. Those are the moments where certain things will surface in your life. And those truths are what I want us to see in this text. There's three of them in your notes.

When they come, they take you by surprise

The first of which is when they come. When those storms in life happen, they will often take you by surprise. And Matthew mentions that explicitly in the text. He says, "Suddenly a great storm arose," which in the original language just means, "and look" — *kai idou*, "and behold!" Well, did you look? It's almost like Matthew's saying, "Can you believe it?" Which leads me to believe that there was nothing on the horizon that would make them think that was coming.

Mark does say that it was at night. They were traveling at night, and often on the Sea of Galilee, the night waves are bigger. This was a picture that I took when I was on the Sea of Galilee. I was actually on the shore, and it was just in the morning. And even in the morning, the waves were pretty rocky.

But what I came to find out about this region is that it's very prone to storms. Because of the topography and geology, you've got some tall mountainous regions on the southern and eastern side, and the cool air from the mountains is kind of channeled through these narrow ravines. And so when that cool air gets forcefully brought down onto the surface of the warm water, it creates a front. If you're a weather person, you already know this — that cool air and warm air, they meet together. The warm air goes up, the cool air goes down, and it creates this. And that can make weather get interesting. We'll just put it that way. I would encourage you to watch Twister, you know, old school. That's what makes a storm chaser so happy. It's like, here we go. It's about to get western. It's about to get rodeo. Let's go.

And the Sea of Galilee, what ends up happening is you have these incredible windstorms that produce these incredible waves. And it can do it like that in an instant. And that's how suffering hits so many times. You're doing everything right. You're doing what you're supposed to do. You crossed your T's. You dotted your I's. You're doing the will of God. And then it's just like out of nowhere. It just hits.

And when that happens, what you will be tempted to do is to question, "Did I really hear from God?" I can tell you in my life this has been true of me. It's easy to equate being obedient to God and flourishing — whereas Jesus already warned us that sometimes you can be blessed, be exactly where you need to be, and yet be persecuted. But for whatever reason, we just kind of assume: if I'm doing what God wants, I'm happy. I'm happy and life is comfortable and great, and God is good.

And yet, in this case, suddenly the suffering hits, and when it hits, I'm sure they questioned, "Did God really say? Did we really hear from the Lord? Did God really say get in the boat?" Or maybe they know Jesus said get in the boat, but they're wondering, "Did you hear from God? Did God really say to go to the other side? You know that crazy demon guy's over there, and a bunch of filthy Gentiles."

Did God really say? And the point that Matthew's trying to drive home is that **there is no suffering that can undo what God has said.** The Bible says about itself that the grass withers and the flower fades, but the Word of God will stand forever — that when God says a word, it is certain, it is sure.

And one of the tricks of the enemy is to attack that truth. To say, "Did God really say you can't eat from any tree in the Garden of Eden? God said that because he doesn't want you to know things like he knows things." He causes doubt and

undermines the credibility of what God has said. And that's exactly what suffering can do in your life. That's what the enemy will do in the midst of your shaken life. He will cause you to question, "Did God really say?"

And when that happens, you need to be reminded that suffering and obedience often go together. They often go together. It is in obedience to the will of God that you will very likely encounter a season of being shaken.

Already mentioned in the Beatitudes, the words of Jesus throughout the New Testament — this is the vision. James chapter 1 says, "Don't be surprised. Don't be shocked by the suffering of various kinds that you endure. Instead, rejoice, because in the suffering God is doing something very great."

Jesus in John 16:33 — it's one of my favorite passages — he says, "In the world, you will have trouble." But right before he says that, he says, "I say this so you can have peace. I say this so that you can have peace. In the world, you will have trouble." Thank you, Jesus, I feel so much better. He says, "In the world you're going to have trouble, but take heart." What? Why? "Because I've overcome the world." He's trying to prepare them for the tension — that, "If you're going to be with me and you're going to follow me, I've overcome the world, but actually the way I've overcome the world, the world's going to kick back hard. It's going to create friction, and hardship, and capital-T Trouble. So I tell this to you in advance so that you can have peace."

And that's exactly what the New Testament authors do. They model this same thing. Paul tells Timothy, "All who desire to live godly lives in Christ Jesus, they will be persecuted" — all. And then he sends Timothy to the church in Thessalonica and he tells the church in Thessalonica, "Remember, guys, how I sent Timothy to warn you in advance." He uses the same word — shaken. "I warned you in advance how your lives were going to be shaken, and I did that so that you would not grow weary, so that you would not lose heart, because this is just what it is. This is the nature of the beast. This is what it means to follow Jesus."

You can follow Jesus and have your life get shaken. And just because your life is shaken doesn't change what God has said. And if you're there because God has sent you, then you need to stay exactly where you are. Do not check out, do not quit, do not give up. If God has sent you, then stay.

And this is true for you if it's in relationship to your marriage, and all of a sudden your marriage blew up and you thought, "I've married a crazy person. I married the wrong person." I've worked with a lot of people, so I don't want to say who's and what, but there's times where people get mad at God because "He told me to marry her, and he knew what I was getting into. He made a mistake." No, he didn't. Maybe you made a mistake; God didn't make a mistake. And you need to

stay, because you made a promise and God's Word hasn't changed. God is faithful to do everything he has promised to do.

Now, it applies in so many arenas of your life, but here's the point. If it's in obedience to the will of God that the storm has come, then do not grow weary in the doing of the good. Do not give up. Do not quit. Stay right where you are.

They suffocate your faith

The second thing that happens when these storms of life hit — they don't just happen suddenly, they suffocate your faith. And that is seen in the language again that Matthew uniquely uses. Matthew says that the violent storm, which is the word *seismos*, arose on the sea so that the boat was being swamped. This word translated "swamped" is not present in Mark or Luke. "They were swamped by the waves, but Jesus kept sleeping. And so the disciples came, and they woke him up, and they said, 'Lord, save us. We're going to die.' And then he said to them, 'Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?'"

Now, this phrase here, "swamped" — it's the Greek word *kalyptō*. It's kind of like *kryptō*, which means to conceal or to cover up or hide. But *kalyptō* is also concealing or covering up, but the way that you cover it up is by smothering it, by putting something on top of it so that no one else can see. It'd be like if you are wrestling somebody and you just say, "I'm just going to put my big fat body on you so you can't breathe." That's the image — which I've had that done to me. Not fun. Not pleasant. Claustrophobic.

That's what your faith can feel like when the storms of life hit. It can feel like, "I can't breathe. I can't see. I'm feeling trapped." This is inherent in this word. And the picture again that Matthew wants you to see is: not only are the wind and waves causing the boat to go like this so that they're shaken, the waves are so big and intimidating that it is literally swamping them. It's like crushing them, or it's so tall that you can't see them from afar.

Now, I've been to Israel. When we were in Israel, not only did we see the Sea of Galilee, but there were these two brothers, amateur archaeologists. They were actually fishermen. But they were fishing one day, and they saw some wood sticking up out of the mud, and they were like, "Oh, that wood's sticking up. Let's see what's going on." So they went over there, and they uncovered this incredible first-century fishing boat. Some people call it the Jesus Boat. There's a technical name for it. It's not the boat Jesus was using in Matthew chapter 8, but it was a boat built in the same period of time, which to me indicates this is something like what they would have had.

Not this, of course. This is just kind of the bare bones. It would've been twenty-seven feet long, five to six feet wide. This is hulled out, but there would've been about four to five feet of height. And so it's probably good those other two guys

didn't jump in. Like, if I was in a storm that Matthew describes where I'm literally getting shaken from left to right, I don't want to be in this thing. I'll tell you that right now.

But that's what it was. And there are recorded waves in that region of one to two feet when waves are pretty calm, four to five when it's rocky. There have actually though been waves that have been ten feet in height. So you can imagine if you are in the middle of a big, big storm that Matthew describes — a great storm, a *megas seismos* — ten-foot waves in a five-foot-tall boat. That's really scary. It's just crushing you and falling down on you, and that is what suffering can feel like. "God, I can't breathe. I can't get a break. When are you going to relent?"

And when that happens, there are things you will tend to think, and there are truths that you need to remember. The thing that you will often think is, "God, do you not care?" And this is magnified in Matthew because of Jesus being asleep. It doesn't just say he was sleeping, it says he was still sleeping — meaning as the ten-foot waves were crushing down on them, Jesus was still asleep.

Now, people say a lot of things about that. I don't know why he was still asleep. I guess if you heal people all night long, you may need a nap, even if you're the Son of God. Maybe he was pretending to be asleep. I don't really know.

Some say that the sleeping Jesus is symbolic. It's symbolic of our faith being sleepy when we suffer, and that you can suffer with sleepy faith and you can be afraid — but if you wake up your sleepy faith, then you won't be afraid anymore. Other people say, "No, that's not what the sleeping Jesus is. The sleeping Jesus is our peace in suffering. So when the storms of life hit, when Jesus is our peace, then we can just kind of be asleep in our suffering and everything's cool and calm and, hey, no big deal because I've got Jesus, so the suffering is like it's a pretend suffering."

I don't buy either one of those things. I think they're both pretty silly. I just told them in a silly way so it makes me sound smart, but I don't buy either one of those things, even though they're very, very popular.

To me, the sleeping Jesus — what Matthew wants us to see is that he was present on the boat. They believe he has power. They believe he can calm the sea. They show that because they wake him up and say, "Would you please save us?" The point is that he was asleep while they were feeling afraid, causing them, I'm sure, to question, "Do you really care?"

And I think this is what's implied — not just because of what Matthew leaves in and leaves out, but in Mark's gospel, they literally phrase it as a question: "Jesus, do you not care? We're about to die." And that is how suffering causes you to feel.

I have felt that way in times of suffering, even though I know God exists, and I know he's powerful, and I know he could snap his fingers and change everything.

And the fact that he doesn't is what causes me to say, "God, why? Is this punishment? Is this because I'm not worthy? Is there some sin in my life that you're trying to purge? And do you really see? Do you see everything I'm seeing? Because I figure if you see it, you would not keep letting things be what they're being right now."

All of that is wrapped up when you face storms like this, and when your life is shaken, it can cause your faith to suffocate.

But they still go to Jesus, and they wake him up, and they say, "Jesus, save us." They use the word *sōzō*, which is the word that's often used in the Bible to talk about how Jesus saves us from sin, delivers us from our distress. Jesus hears them. He wakes up. He doesn't rebuke them for waking him up. "Man, I was having such a good dream. What's wrong?" He doesn't say, "You have little faith, therefore I'm not going to calm the sea." No. Their faith was properly placed, and he saves them.

So when Jesus says, "Ye of little faith," I don't think he's chiding them that their faith was incorrect. We've said before in this journey how the power of faith is not determined by the person who feels it or the person who exercises it, but the object in which it's placed. In other words, what makes faith powerful is not how sincere you are, but whether or not you are placing confidence in the right person. If your faith is in the right person or in the right object, even if you have weak faith, it will still be sufficient to save you.

We talked about the two mountain climbers — how one can have a strong grip, but if he has a strong grip and he grabs a loose rock, then it's not going to save his life, because it was misplaced. But if a trembling hand grabs a solid rock, even though the faith is weak, the solid rock will save his life because the faith was properly placed. And that's what Matthew's showing here. Their faith was properly placed. They knew that Jesus could save. They exercised faith. They woke him up, and they asked him, "Save us." And so that part is correct.

And so what we need to remember is that when God is silent, or when Jesus is seemingly silent, we dare not mistake his silence for his indifference or lack of power — because **there is no silence that changes God's power to save.**

And this is always true in your suffering. And it often is the case that in your suffering, in the moment, God will feel like he's asleep. There's a lot of Old Testament psalms where the psalmist is like, "God, can you please wake up?" It's not surprising that you would feel as though he's asleep. But do not mistake his silence for his indifference to your pain. He is not indifferent. He sees your need and he responds to those who pray in faith.

There is no silence that will change God's power to save. But here's what you need to remember: in that moment, if your faith is weak, you need to be reminded

there's no real reason for you to be afraid. The fact that God is with you should be sufficient to neutralize your fear, even if you can't hear him.

And that's what Jesus responds with. Again, Matthew is unique, because when Jesus calms the storm, he does something else first. In Luke's gospel and Mark's gospel, Jesus calms the storm, and then he responds to the disciples and says, "Why do you have such little faith?" Only in Matthew does Jesus wake up, and before he calms the storm, look at his disciples and say, "Why are you afraid?"

And so when you ask the question, "What did they not believe? In what way was their faith incorrect?" — it has a very specific answer. Their faith was correct because it was rightly placed. Their faith was in the right person. Their faith was small because of the fear.

Jesus says, "Why are you afraid?" And then you ask the question, "Well, why would they not be afraid?" They were ten-foot waves, right? If I'm in a five-foot-tall boat and there are ten-foot waves, I don't think Jesus is saying, "What's the big deal?" That's a big deal. That's ten-foot waves. We're about to sink. I don't think Jesus is saying, "You guys should know that I'm on a mission from God and that I can't die, so you guys should just chill out." I really don't think that's what he's saying.

He's addressing the root of the fear, which was: "I know I should be afraid of this, but I'm not just afraid of the physical danger. I'm afraid Jesus doesn't care. I'm afraid he doesn't love me. I'm afraid he doesn't see. I'm afraid he's somehow letting me go through this because I'm unworthy and I deserve this."

And in some cases, sure enough, maybe that's the case. But in this case, when you're doing exactly what God told you to do and the storm and the shaking is happening as a result of that, and you feel like God is silent — do not ever let his silence make you question whether his heart is for you, whether he sees you. And if you can remember he sees and he loves you and he is for you, then even in the chaos, you will not be afraid.

Isaiah 41:10 — "Fear not, I am with you. Be not dismayed, I am your God. I will help you. I will uphold you. I will strengthen you with my righteous right hand." And again and again and again and again, the Bible says, "Fear not. Fear not. Be not afraid." Three hundred sixty-five of them, they say — one for every day of the year.

Do not be scared when God feels silent. Even Jesus on the cross cried out, "My God, why have you forsaken me?" The Father felt silent. Saturday felt like God was silent. Our Messiah is dead. But he wasn't silent. He might have been silent, but he was working. He was working, and on the third day, God raised Jesus from the dead. And when he's silent in your life, it doesn't mean he's not working.

God is always working all things together for good. Always. All things. Even the hard things, even the scary things, even the things that you don't quite understand. He has a reason for doing the things that he does, and he has a reason for doing them in the way that he does — which leads us to the last point about a shaken life.

Every storm serves the Father's will

It can surprise you when it comes. It can suffocate your faith. But never forget that **every storm serves the will of God**. Every storm serves the Father's will, including this storm.

Now, there's some qualifications here. I don't know why God allows suffering, and so people who claim to know why you're suffering in your life — those people are probably idiots that you shouldn't listen to. Because no one is smart enough or God enough to know why you may be suffering. There's only one person who knows the answer to that question. They're not him. I'm not him. That's God. He rarely shares his plans with people. I hate to break it to you.

And so "I don't know" is the right answer to why God allows certain pain and suffering. As a pastor, there have been many times where I've questioned — not even for my suffering, but for the suffering of people in our church who are good, godly, awesome people, and yet they go through so much pain, and it makes you question and wonder, "Lord, why?"

Here's what I know. **I can't know why, but I can know why it isn't.** I can know it isn't because he doesn't care. I know it isn't because he's indifferent. He's not indifferent. He's not impotent. It's not like he's powerless in front of your suffering. He demonstrated his care and power through this very miracle. He gets up. He rebukes the wind and waves, and immediately they cease.

The men raise the question, "What kind of man is this?" They don't say, "Who is this?" They know who it is. This is Jesus, you know, Mary's son, the guy we've been running around with for a couple of months. We know who it is. We're struggling to figure out what he is.

Jesus was busting their paradigm. He was busting their categories. They would concede he's got incredible teaching ability. He teaches with authority. He's making some outlandish claims about being the Messiah, or at least hinting that way. He hasn't said it outright, but he's inclined us to think so. He can perform miracles. He's wielding the authority of God. He can tell disease what to do, and it does it. He can cleanse a leper with his word. He's obviously something unique. He's obviously very special. He's obviously sent from God. He obviously has heavenly authority.

But this miracle is unique, because in the Old Testament, the only person who was able to still the storms was Yahweh alone. And they would've immediately thought of Psalm 107, which we read earlier as we started our service — because in Psalm 107, one of the hallmarks of Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, is that he alone can calm the deep.

It is very common in ancient cultures, including the Middle Eastern culture of Israel, that the deep waters — it was symbolic of chaos, and even evil. Before the earth was formed, the Spirit of God hovered over the deep. The deep is symbolic of chaos before God brings things into order. And the idea is that God is uniquely capable of bringing order to the chaos, and that mankind is uniquely incapable of doing that very thing. We're at the mercy of the sea. It tosses us here and there and everywhere, because we're just mere men and we're just mere women. And yet here is Jesus — a man — who can calm it.

And so they would have thought to themselves, "What is going on? Jesus, you're busting my paradigm. You're breaking the categories." Just like the scribes and the Pharisees were struggling with the same thing. "Where do you get off talking like this? What makes you think your authority is equal to God?"

And so Jesus is not being unclear on who he really is. He really is the Son of Man. He is the Lord of Psalm 107. But Psalm 107's description of the Lord never, ever indicated that that Lord would somehow be with them in the boat. Over them, sure. In the heavens, yes. But not with them in the boat. And Jesus is demonstrating, "No, not only can I save, not only will I save — I am with you, because I love you, and I am doing for you what you cannot."

Psalm 107: "They cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. He stilled the storm with a whisper, and the wind and the seas were hushed. They rejoiced when the waves grew quiet. Let them give thanks to the Lord for his faithful love and his wondrous works for all humanity."

It's a parallel picture of Matthew chapter 8. The only difference is that in Matthew 8, they don't give thanks to the Lord. They are afraid and they wonder, "Man, what is going on? What kind of man is this?"

And the answer is: Jesus is the Christ. He's the Christ. He's the Messiah. He has all authority. But he's also God in the flesh who can still the wind and waves — which means in your life, it doesn't matter what it is, whether it's a storm in your heart or a storm in your life because of some physical suffering, **there is no storm that Jesus cannot still.**

He can use even the most horrific things for his purposes. And you know that's true because of what you see happen at the crucifixion. The Father, in his divine wisdom, orchestrated everything: Jesus being handed over, betrayed by Judas, the soldiers whipping him, beating him within an inch of his life, Pilate raising the question, "This guy's done nothing wrong, but if that's what you want to do, then

let him be crucified," washing his hands of the matter. Jesus dying on the cross, crying out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Even when it felt like, "God, you're out of control. The devil's got this one made" — even then, **the Father had the devil exactly where he wanted him**. He works all things together for good. And it was actually the suffering of Jesus that brought about our salvation. It was actually because he suffered that you and I can be set free — because in the suffering of Jesus, he wasn't just dying for his sin. He didn't have any sin. He was dying for our sin.

Just like we sang about: "It was my death he died. I've been raised to life. Hallelujah, the Lamb of God. The Lamb of God in my place, his blood poured out, my sin erased. It was my death he died." That's what you see happen on the cross.

And what's so crazy — it was the submission of Jesus to his Father's will that brought that suffering into his life. His life was shaken because he was obedient. And guess what? When his life got shaken, he stayed. He didn't call down a legion of angels even though he had every right. He didn't say, "Get me off of this thing. These people are not worth it." He stayed, because he knew that he'd been sent by his heavenly Father. And the Father used his suffering to bring about our salvation.

Jesus, I'm sure, felt like God was silent in that moment, but he didn't let God's silence take him off his mission. He remembered the Father is faithful to his word. "If I die for sinners, then I will be raised." He said it to his disciples — I don't know how many times, at least three: "I'm going to die, and then I'm going to rise. I'm going to die, and then I'm going to rise. I'm going to die, and then I'm going to rise." And he tested his mettle at the cross, and Jesus stayed, and he kept his faith, and he believed, "The Father will save me."

And if he can do that through the suffering of Jesus, then he can do that through your suffering and mine. He used the suffering of Jesus to bring about our salvation. He can use your suffering to bring about the same — and that may be God's saving purposes in your life. It may be how he sanctifies you and grows you and transforms you. It may be that your suffering is for someone else, someone else who will come to see and know that the Lord is good.

Certainly, if your suffering is because of your obedience to the mission, then you should count it joy to share in the sufferings of Christ. That's what the New Testament authors say again and again and again. "I count it a great privilege that I would be able to share in the sufferings of Jesus, because if I can join you in your sufferings, Jesus, I can join you when you rise."

And if you can hold those truths in tension, you can get through anything. Jesus is sovereign over sin and hell and the grave, and Jesus is submitted to the will of his heavenly Father. And if you are following Jesus, then he has all rule and authority over everything in your life that is causing you to question your faith. And if you

can stay submitted to the purposes of your heavenly Father — just as Jesus stayed submitted to accomplish God's will for your life — then just as he was faithful to bring Jesus back from death, he will be faithful to get you through this pain. There will be glory, there will be a resurrection, there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

Matthew, in his gospel, uses this word three times. Right here in the storm. Again, when Jesus dies on the cross — it says that the earth shook, *seismos*, great earthquake, and the Roman centurion looked at Jesus and said, "This guy is truly the Son of God." Then the last time it happens in Matthew's gospel is when the Son of Man comes again, and when he comes riding on the clouds, it says that the earth begins to shake. And that same thing happens when the angel showed up and he rolled away the stone — the earth began to shake, and the stone was rolled away.

So the same shaking that makes you question, "Does God really care?" is the very shaking he often uses to bring salvation into your life. The same shaking that Jesus encountered to bring salvation to the world. And the same shaking that will happen when God demonstrates his faithfulness in resurrection, his faithfulness in the Second Coming, his faithfulness in the new heavens and the new earth.

And if you can hold that in tension, then you can get through.

Invitation

And so I don't know what that looks like in your life. I don't know the suffering that you're facing, but you have a Father in heaven who knows it and sees it and who is committed to you every step.

And so if this morning you would respond in repentance and say, "God, help me to see these things. Help me to see these truths so that I can remain faithful and steadfast in this season of being shook." And if I can pray with you or for you, I'd be happy to do that. There are counselors in our church who would be happy to come alongside of you in this season.

If you're not a Christian and you find yourself in this season of life, I believe part of God's purpose may be in bringing you to faith. It may be bringing you to a place of humility and dependence on the Lord, that you finally say, "I give in. I quit. I can't run my life. Jesus, you're the King. You're the Sovereign. I bow the knee. No more conditions, total allegiance. I'm going to follow you."

And if that's you today and that's the decision you make, then I promise you Jesus will make it worth it. He will redeem all of that pain, all of that suffering. He won't waste a single ounce — if you'll respond, if you'll repent, if you'll trust, if you'll believe. And so if that's something I can help you do, then please, please let me know. You can come down here to the front during the invitation. There's a

connection card on the chair in the seat in front of you. You can indicate a spiritual decision that way, and then as our ushers take the offering in a moment, you can put it in the offering plate. But respond to the Lord however he's leading in this moment.

End of delivery transcript. Source: Broadview Church standalone YouTube sermon upload (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9NFstieMfcs>). Section headings above were added for readability — Wes did not announce them by these words from the platform (he preached them as "surprise / suffocate / serves").